

ASA Annual Business Meeting 2006

Weds 12th April 12pm Keele University

Present

John Gledhill (Chair); Lisette Josephides (Treasurer); Simone Abram (acting Secretary); Rohan Jackson (Admin); Richard Fardon; Ronnie Frankenberg; Ian Harper; Kate Degnen; Jonathan Skinner; Anselma Gallinat; Pat Caplan; Sharon Macdonald; John Postill; Alberto Corsin-Jimenez; David Mills; Veronica Strang; Glenn Bowman; Nigel Rapport; Julie Scott; Hilary Callan; Andrew Garner; Wendy James; David Parkin; Elizabeth Colson; Joan Vincent.

1. Apologies

Trevor Marchand.

2. Election of new committee members.

Iris Jean-Klein was unable to continue as secretary due to ill-health. Simone Abram agreed to transfer from being Networks Officer to being Secretary. She was duly elected.

This left the position of Network Officer free, and John Postill kindly volunteered to take up this post and was duly elected.

Andrew Garner has been acting in a combined role as Liaison Officer, with focus on younger members of association, representing Anthropology Matters. His post on the committee was confirmed by the ABM.

3. minutes of last ABM

As these were only available electronically (due to difficulties of printing/copying facilities at Keele), members were asked to send any comments or objections to the minutes of the ABM 2005 within one week of the ABM.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising not covered in the chair's report.

5a. Chair's report.

See attached report.

Additional items:

The chair thanked Iris Jean-Klein for her work as secretary of the association.

The chair thanked David Mills for his work as archive officer, historian of the discipline, and in supporting ASA in making available facts and figures which have been fundamental to securing the discipline's position in various contexts. David was congratulated on his appointment to a lectureship at the Department of Education of Oxford University.

Re: problems in the CRNS, Glenn Bownmann alerted members to the fact that the September issue of JRAI has an article on French issue and on the public face of anthropology, which should help to raise publicity.

Hilary Callan requested clarification of the position of WCA on new associations joining. RAI wasn't invited to join in first tranche, but trying to persuade RAI to apply for WCA membership.

Richard Fardon explained that this was simply because they started with professional associations not learned societies (one from each) but that there was no reason why further associations could not join. RAI needs to apply to join and then the president recommends a vote.

On Ethics, Ian Harper reported from the Ethics review meeting held at 8am on 12.4.06.

The meeting reviewed the ESRC's Research Ethics Framework and its potentially restrictive impact on ethnographic research, and the implications of the Data Protection Act 1998's requirement for research material to be destroyed once it has served its immediate purpose. The meeting recommended that the current Ethics blog on the ASA website needs to be expanded, and it was proposed to include some case studies of particular ethical issues arising, and that PG students be encouraged to use the blog to discuss present ethical dilemmas. This would help to demonstrate that ethnographic ethics were an ongoing project and were under constant monitoring, rather than a simple case that could be adjudicated in advance.

ACTION Will email members to alert them to new materials as they appear on the blog.

Media

A short discussion was held over how can we raise the profile in anthropology using visual media.

HC urged the committee to talk to Andre Singer who chairs RAI film and media committee.

AG informed the meeting that a member of AM has been working on Pocket Visions, a small production company which has had a showing of small short films. The chair also noted the increasing possibilities to make visual media available through the internet.

ACTION Media officer to pursue these possibilities in discussion with relevant colleagues.

Membership

RJ explained that not all non-payers have been 'purged' from the membership. However, when all members are put on to the new electronic database system later this year, non-payers who have already received a letter will not be put onto the new system.

RF proposed that a list of non-payers be published to name and shame.

ALSISS academy for the Learned Societies in the Social Sciences.

Ronnie Frankenburg confirmed that ALSISS meetings are not accessible or useful, and that he has considered revoking his membership.

The meeting agreed that since they had only recently had a new leadership, that they should be given some time to turn themselves around before the ASA makes a decision over withdrawing from the academy. The ASA had previously withdrawn, but the ASA had rejoined in a period when it appeared that the Academy would become useful.

RF pointed out that in addition to generally doing very little, when they had done something, they produced a report which was contrary to our interests.

ACTION: give one more year's subscription, and if they have not actually done anything significant or different in this year then we will withdraw.

JG will also set down again the concerns the ASA has, from the meeting, in a letter to the Academy.

5b. Treasurer's report.

Please see attached report. There were no additional comments.

12.10-12.20 lunch break!

6. Membership issues.

New members - a list of eligible applicants was read out for approval. The list was unanimously approved (please see meeting agenda). New members were welcomed to the ASA.

Approval was given for changes to membership so that the committee can accept members outside the schedule of the AGM. In future there will be no deadline for applications. Applications will be considered by the committee in the first committee meeting following receipt of a complete membership application and references.

7. Modernisation of membership procedures

RJ noted delays in the production of the Annals and Directory for 2005 which have only just been mailed out and noted that they are increasingly expensive to mail out. He proposes to combine them into one volume and move the membership directory online. This will make it easier to search and to keep up to date. Annals information doesn't necessarily change annually and could therefore be usefully kept online. Paper copies could be sent out on request. Annals could then contain annual reports, etc.

Several members noted the need to retain some form of paper copy to look up things like potential examiners, speakers, etc. and that basic information should include a membership list with addresses. RJ noted that producing the index itself is not labour-intensive, but that the current list of index items needs to be honed.

PC made a plea for a book with names, emails and addresses. She also requested that a departmental list, which is extremely useful, should be collated but that one should not need to follow links through to departmental sites to see the overview of who is in which department. A full list over who is where would be very useful.

VS requested that this complete list include commonwealth area departments.

The dept'l staff should be listed in the departmental report.

These proposals were agreed

Action: RJ to move the membership directory online, but retain a separate list of members of each department.

8. Conferences

8a. 2007. Julie Scott, on behalf of the London Metropolitan university conferenc eteam confirmed that the conference theme is coming together, as 'Thinking Through Tourism'. Will be working up programme over next few months. Timing and arrangements will be discussed with JG and RJ.

8b. 2008. Veronica Strang confirmed that preparations for the 2008 conference in Auckland, New Zealand, were well underway and that the NZ and Australian associations have agreed to subsume their conference into this one, into a 3-way conference. A draft theme document is now available on the theme 'ownership and appropriation'. The conference will be held at the end of 2008 at the beginning of December (spring, which is around 2 weeks after the AAA, and in time for he holidays, specifically so that ASA members can be encouraged to coordinate their visits with other activities. This timing also makes it possible to offer cheap student accommodation.

PC asked that the ASA investigate the possibility of making block bookings for flights to help reduce the costs for conference attendance.

Action: The long draft document will be put on the web for circulation.

Action: the ASA will look into charter or block booking of tickets.

NB. There will be a Firth lecture in 2008 at Easter tied into an LSE conference which the ASA will sponsor.

8c. Conferences 2009 A call for the conference in 2009 will be made.

David Shankland (Bristol) proposed a conference for 2009 called Anthropology and Archaeology. This was discussed, but it was suggested that a full call for Conference 2009 and 2010 should be made after the committee has reviewed the guidelines for ASA conferences.

Action: Committee will discuss guidelines for future ASA conferences and put forward revised guidelines, before a new call for conference proposals for 2009, 2010 is made following the next committee meeting.

A short discussion was held on conference publications.

PC noted that big conferences generate more papers than can be accommodated in a single volume and asked whether the ASA could do some web-based publishing?

JG noted that there were problems in relation to RAE rating of new and online journals. He also noted that there was no dearth of good journals with less than good papers.

VS agreed that existing journals can produce special issues related to the conference.

WJ agree that special issues are a good way forward.

AG suggested that panel organisers can approach publishers for a special issue.

DS argued that there is room for a more informal space to extend Anthropology Matters, for example, to make space for getting material read.

RF noted that edited books had been killing journals, so it was actually quite positive that journals have more room now that there are problems producing edited volumes. He also noted the enormous amount of work involved in producing peer reviews.

9. AOB

RAI/ASA cooperation.

HC and AG updated members on the welcome pack for new postgraduates. HC noted that in 2005 recruitment was up 33% in RAI student associates and in members of ASA. Combined student membership was 79 (cf 61 in 2004). The plan now is to offer ASA books to ASA student members for add-on subscription of £18. As the RAI have already printed information suggesting this would be possible from 2007, the meeting agreed that this offer should start from 2007.

NB HC noted that individual subscription rates will be set in about a month with Blackwells, so any changes need to be made clear within a month.

ASA is offering freestanding PG membership but a discount needs to be added. Please inform RAI within a month so that this information can also be distributed.

RAI Publicises student memberships currently by sending out multiple copies of a poster to all UK depts in the summer once the rates are set, to go into new welcome packs for new PG students. **An offer was made by HC that any further info from ASA can be included into what the RAI send out (up to one sheet of A4 or any additional information integrated into the current pack), but that she will need to know within 2 months.**

Survival International (who were not allowed to send campaign postcards to conference) have requested our support for their Stamp It Out campaign urging media writers not to use the terms 'primitive' or 'stone age' to describe people. The meeting agreed to support the campaign.

JG proposed to rename the annual meeting to AGM rather than ABM. This was approved unanimously.

Meeting formally closed 13.21.